

PUBLIC HEARING

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St Mary's Hospital
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being

1 MR. REEVES: I'd like to thank everybody for
2 here today. If you take a seat so we can get started. Again,
3 if you haven't signed in, please do so so we can keep a record
4 for the court reporter of everybody that was here. We'd
5 appreciate it.

6 We're just going to have a short presentation, and then
7 we're going to listen to questions and comments. So that the
8 court reporter can take everything down, would you please state
9 your name at least the first time you speak, just to make --
10 instead of just saying "A lady," or "A man," if we could have
11 your name, that would be very helpful.

12 I'm Butch Reeves. I'm the chief legal counsel for
13 Governor Huckabee's office. We have Tim Humphreys from the
14 Secretary of State's office. He's the chief counsel for Sharon
15 Priest. Larry Crane, an attorney in the Attorney General's
16 office representing Mark Pryor. Ron Maxwell from the Secretary
17 of State's office, and Gregg Kirkpatrick from the Governor's
18 office. We are the people -- the staffers who will be doing

the

19 redistricting for the board -- the leg work, actually.

20 We have a web site. Right up here on the board,
21 www.state.ar.us/arkdistrict. You can get a link from the
22 Arkansas Legislature page, from Governor Huckabee's page, or

actual

23 Sharon Priest's page or Mark Pryor's page, but that's our

that

24 web page. It has all of our names, addresses and web sites

25 you can e-mail us stuff on. There are also links on that page

3

the

1 to the Census Bureau. There are some preliminary 1999 city

2 numbers on there -- estimates. There's some other things on

be

3 census web page. This also has the time line of when we will

4 doing this, when we get the numbers, when the plans will be

5 developed, when the meetings are next -- well, that there will

6 be meetings next summer. We hope to have this done by October

7 so that people can decide that November for the next year about

8 running for office.

9 We've been told by the Census Bureau -- or, actually,

10 promised, we'll get the census numbers by the end of March. It

11 will take a few days to load it, then we'll start drawing the

12 plans. So we hope by next summer we'll be back out doing out

13 another one of these with a proposed plan for you to look it.

can

14 It will be on our web site before we come next summer so you

15 pull down the plan and look at it, have your questions and

16 comments already. The board probably won't vote on it until

17 September of 2001, so there will be plenty of time for you to

18 have comments. And instead of us dragging the maps up here

19 liked happened in '90, they will be on the web site so you can
20 see it before we get here, so you'll know what your comments
and
21 questions are.

22 This is actually the software we'll be using. It's
called
23 Autobound. It's based on Artview and Tiger. We have about 13
24 licenses, I think we bought, for the Secretary of State's
25 office, the Governor's office, the AG's office, and the

4

1 Redistricting office itself. Ron Sheffield is the coordinator
2 for the redistricting staff located in the AGON building across
3 from the state Capitol. So those computers are over there. We
4 would prefer that you send e-mails or comments on the web page
5 or to us individually. It would make it very helpful if you
6 could do that. There is going to be some log-on capability for
7 you to look at things, perhaps print things off of it, maps for
8 your district or your town or your county. It is up and
running
9 right now.

10 Now, I understand that it doesn't -- it has the 91
11 districts on it. It doesn't have the census stuff. It won't
12 have that until next year. The building block that we're going
13 to use for the census this time is the precinct, the JP
precinct
14 blocks is the ones we're going to use. Last time they used

in 15 townships. The Census Bureau has -- will give us the numbers

16 JP precinct numbers when we get them.

plus 17 We estimate that this time there will be about 25,000

18 in each house district and about 72,000 plus in each senate

19 district. Last time it was roughly 23,000 for a house and

20 67,000 for the senate. And so you can see if you -- if your

21 particular district has grown by, you know, 2,000 something

22 people or more, some changes will have to be made. Precincts

23 will have to be taken out and given to somebody else. And if

talked 24 there's been enough growth, which -- you know, we -- I've

25 to Senator Bisbee about this, and we've talked about this

5

districts. 1 before. There may new House districts and new Senate

2 If y'all gain, somebody has to lose.

the 3 And so that's kind of the process. We will start with

4 91 lines and take those lines, plug the numbers in, and see

5 where the changes have to be made. It's just too difficult to

6 start from a blank page. So we'll start with the 91 lines and

7 go from there. The board hasn't actually sat down and decided

8 all the criteria they're going to look at. That hasn't been

9 decided yet. There are some things that the Supreme Court has

10 said are a given, that you have to look at. We will certainly

11 take that into consideration, but what -- but the things the
12 board is actually going to look at in drawing this, they've not
13 decided yet. That will probably come next year. This software
14 will also be available to the House and Senate to draw the
15 congressional district lines.

16 After the Board of Apportionment is finished, through
some
17 means, it will be available to the counties to draw JP
districts
18 and/or to the schools, I'm told, to draw school district
19 boundaries, if they need to. So it will be available probably
20 about four places in the state, so your county could go, and
one
21 will be here at Fayetteville at the CAST -- Central Arkansas
22 Special Technology Center -- to actually use the computer to
23 draw your JP districts, I'm told.

24 Okay. If you have any questions as the process goes on
25 between now and next April or now and next July, you can
contact

6

1 any of us. You can contact Ron Sheffield at that main office.
2 What's that number? 682-4592 is Ron Sheffield's number, and
3 that's the main redistricting office in Little Rock. But you
4 can e-mail any of us. You can call any of us. Any comments or
5 questions or concerns you want to pass on, will certainly be
6 passed on to the full board. And that's the reason we're here
7 with a court reporter today to get your comments on record so

8 the board can hear them and see them.

9 Okay. I guess Tim and I can kind of serve as the
10 moderators, so we'll throw it open for questions or comments.
11 If you just want to state something, if you want to ask a
12 question, or tell us something you like or don't like about the
13 91 that you want changed, or whatever. Senator Bisbee.

14 SENATOR BISBEE: Butch, you said something that
15 really concerns me. You said you were going to use the current
16 JP districts as the building blocks?

17 MR. REEVES: Precincts.

18 MR. HUMPHRIES: The precincts, as they were
19 reported to the state data center who reported them to the
20 census of 2000.

21 SENATOR BISBEE: Okay. You're going to use
22 precincts, not JPs?

23 MR. CRANE: That's correct.

24 MR. REEVES: Sorry.

25 SENATOR BISBEE: Okay. Thank you.

7

1 MR. REEVES: Yes. They were reported to the data
2 center at UALR, and that was reported to the Census Bureau.

The

3 last time we didn't get them that way, but that's the way we're
4 going to get them this time. Sorry. Senator Brown.

5 SENATOR BROWN: Yeah, just a clarifying question.

6 You said there'll be public hearings next summer. You're
7 working on preparing a draft that's shared with the board. Is
8 it shared with anyone else -- in particular, legislators --
9 before it moves to that public arena? Or is it held within the
10 board while it's being developed.

11 MR. HUMPHRIES: We haven't really established a
12 procedure for that yet. It was sort of informally shared with
13 legislators in '91.

14 SENATOR BROWN: Yeah. I suspect a lot of
comments
15 from that group.

16 MR. HUMPHRIES: Right. And there's no formal
17 procedure yet. We're hoping that everything will be available
18 on the Internet. We're hoping that, you know, before we go out
19 in this next round of hearings, that maps like this will
20 probably be available in the state capital for people to see.

21 SENATOR BROWN: But there can be an informal
22 process. There's nothing in your rules that says that --

23 MR. HUMPHRIES: No.

24 SENATOR BROWN: -- information remains
25 confidential or something until the board reviews it as a
draft?

1 MR. HUMPHRIES: Yeah, as soon as we get a draft
2 and before we start the next hearings, I suspect anybody who

3 wants to -- like I say, it will be on the Internet, so I think
4 anybody who wants to will be able to look at it and comment on
5 it.

6 SENATOR BROWN: I guess my comment is that's
fine,
7 but it kind of becomes available publicly at the same time for
8 everyone, but if there's kind of an inside group that gets to
9 work with it and move it around before it becomes public,
that's
10 a little different question but...

11 SENATOR BISBEE: Well, Butch, I'll go now if
12 nobody else is jumping up and saying anything.

13 The concerns we have from where we're at right now, from
14 the last census, from the last redistricting, and particularly
15 in the house seats, every house seat in the third congressional
16 district is between four and five percent over the optimum
17 number. Which, basically, shorted western Arkansas at least
one
18 representative seat.

19 I understand why some of that happens because you
consider
20 incumbencies, and you -- you made the comment that you were
21 going to start with the existing districts. That really
greatly
22 concerns me because I -- I think between Benton and Washington
23 County, we will probably gain -- we have enough population
24 growth to gain three representative seats. I think the two
25 counties are going to come out 300,000, and at 25,000 apiece,

1 that's eight seats, and I think right now we've got five.
2 There's no way you can start with the existing seats. You
know,
3 and if you start in southeast Arkansas with existing seats and
4 work your way to northwest Arkansas, the same thing is going
to
5 happen again. And I think most of the folks here are looking
6 for some reassurance that that's not what's going to happen.

7 MR. REEVES: We've talked about that before. The
8 reason southeast Arkansas was started, because there was a
court
9 mandate to do so. We don't have that court mandate this time.
10 So where we actually start will have to be something the board
11 will have to decide, and that hasn't been decided yet. Every
12 place we've been wants us to start with their county.

Everybody
13 says, "Start here and go out from there," you know. But we
14 understand that. We will take all that into consideration. I
15 can't tell you exactly the criteria the board's going to use
16 because they haven't made that determination yet.

17 I don't know any other way. I mean, to erase the lines
18 and start from scratch would be very, very difficult. So I
19 understand your concern about the districts being up here, but
20 moving the lines that already exist is much easier than placing
21 the lines down on a blank page. And that's -- so that's all
I'm
22 really saying. I'm not saying we're not going to take that
into
23 consideration.

24 SENATOR BISBEE: Well, however you choose to do

25 it, as long as we end up with the right answer.

10

1 MR. REEVES: Right. Because the variance
2 statewide, according to the U. S. Supreme Court which says this
3 is what the Constitution says, 10 percent variance statewide
for
4 legislative House and Senate districts. Now, that doesn't mean
5 if it's less than 10 percent that's not challengeable. That
6 doesn't mean that at all. Or that if it's more than 10
percent,
7 that's not challengeable -- that's automatically challengeable,
8 overruled either. And what that means is, if we count all the
9 Senate and House districts, the variance between the population
10 between, say, House district one and House district a hundred,
11 all 100 districts has to be within the 10 percent variance
12 range. That's what that means. And we have -- we're going to
13 do the best we can to work within that.

14 Now, that's been the leeway in the times past, and so
15 we're certainly going to take that into consideration when
doing
16 that.

17 SENATOR BISBEE: Well, Butch, the things we would
18 ask you to do, though, is historically look what's been
19 happening in Benton and Washington County. If we are at zero,
20 if we're at the optimum number, at the time that you
redistrict,

21 by the time we elect somebody, just in 2002, they will already
22 be past the five percent over.

23 My district -- the senate district I represent right now
24 is supposed to have 68,500 people in it. I've got something
25 over 92,000 people I'm representing. We're not getting our

11

1 goal. Senator Brown is the same, 68,500 is approaching or
2 passing a 100,000 in his district. We would like to think
that
3 the board would realize that that's going on and at least make
4 some attempt to keep us on the low side going in so that as we
5 come out in 2010, that we're not as grossly unrepresented as we
6 are now. We're underrepresented.

7 MR. REEVES: I can tell you, from my viewpoint,
we
8 will do the best we can to honor that request. I can't promise
9 it because I'm not a voting board member. There's only three
of
10 them.

11 SENATOR BISBEE: Well, but I assume that we're
12 being recorded.

13 MR. REEVES: Yes, you are. Yes, you are. And
the
14 board needs to hear that.

15 SENATOR BISBEE: But the other -- the other
16 question that I'm asked or have been asked in the past by

the

17 Attorney General Pryor that I would like to get on record is
18 response from, I think, the vast majority of folks in here, and
19 if somebody's different, I'm sure they'll stand up and correct
20 me, but we were asked do we carry across county lines.

be

21 Evidently, in some parts of the state that's a big issue
22 where people don't want to cross county lines. In a vast
23 majority of us that were present at that meeting said we
24 consider the Benton and Washington County line, basically, to
25 invisible, that that's part of Northwest Arkansas. But we

would

12

over

1 like to try not to cross the county line down into Fort Smith.
2 Or, you know, we really don't want to cross the county line
3 to Harrison, if that point will be well taken.

4 MR. REEVES: Right. Next question.

5 MR. CHARLES AGEE: Hello. My name is Charles
6 Agee, and I'm from Prairie Grove.

chance

7 And as a follow-up on the senator's comments here or
8 questions, if you will, would it be possible for the board to
9 give us parameters prior to their starting this? For example,
10 we will have 25,000 in the house, give or take a percentage, or
11 a number. And if do you that, then it gives the public a
12 to comment on those parameters -- statistical parameters --

13 prior to the time that the boundaries are drawn to say this is
14 statistically possible or statistically impossible.

15 The same way, to follow up with the senator here, talking
16 about the growth, why is it not -- or would it be or could we
17 request that you look at the fastest growing areas, and if you
18 have a parameter of five percent or ten percent, take those
19 fastest growing statistical areas which are very obvious if you
20 look at your web site from just the '98 -- '98 to '99 in the
21 other districts and put them on the low side. For example,

that

22 they will have the smallest number of people in those areas you
23 give the greatest strength, as the senator had said.

24 So it appears that if -- it would appear more fair to us
25 if you guys would ask the board to ahead of time define the

13

1 parameters so we're not fighting separate issues at some time
2 down the road. So we'd look at statistical issues before you
3 start your work, we look at the results from that point.

4 MR. HUMPHRIES: It's this group that needs to ask
5 the board to do that, and you've just done that. This is all
6 being taken down by the court reporter, and this is all being
7 duly reported to the board. The board will meet again. It's
8 met once to sort of kick this hearing process off. And the
9 board will meet again sometime prior to our getting the numbers
10 in March to discuss those types of issues. And we don't know

11 the exact time of that meeting yet, but it will be well
12 publicized, and we urge you to not only use this forum, but to
13 also use our web site, our comments section on the web site,
14 that we just gave you the address of earlier, and also all of
15 our phone numbers and all of our mail addresses are there, too.

16 So, you know, I think that you guys -- in essence, you
17 have asked the board to do that, and that's going to be duly
18 passed along.

I'm 19 MR. LUCAS ROEBUCK: My name is Lucas Roebuck.
20 with the Benton County Daily Record.

21 My first question -- I have two questions. My first
22 question is I was wondering if in your opinion if it's legal
for 23 the board to consider future growth for redistricting lines,
and 24 if they did actually state that was the reason they drew
25 district lines as they did, would that be challengeable in

14

1 court?

2 MR. REEVES: Tim's been through more than one of
3 these redistricting and so I'll let him answer that question.

4 MR. HUMPHRIES: With regard to the second part of
5 your question, would it challengeable in court, all I can say
is 6 every one of these things since the Constitution passed in 1874
7 has been challenged in court, so, yeah, that could be

8 challengeable in court. But I don't know of anything that's --
9 any legal rule that says that the board can't take something
10 like that into consideration.

11 MR. ROEBUCK: My second question, and I may be
12 ignorant on this fact, but has the board or do they plan to
13 state a goal to get as close to zero variance as possible on
14 districts? Is that -- have they said that's one of their
15 objectives, to try to be as fair as possible.

16 MR. HUMPHRIES: The board hasn't addressed any
17 kind of issues like that yet. The only issues that the board
18 has addressed so far is the issue of date, time, and place of
19 these hearings that we're having, so -- and the purpose of
20 these hearings is to find out people's concerns about issues like
21 that, which are being -- going to be reported back to the
22 board.
23 or,
24 So at the current time, no, the board has not discussed that
25 obviously, not taken any position.

26 MR. REEVES: Tim, what was the variance in '90?
27 Do you remember.

15

28 MR. HUMPHRIES: The variance was right at -- I
29 did
30 know this exactly once, but it was right at nine percent. It
31 was between nine and ten percent. Four plus percent on the
32 high

4 side and four plus percent on the low side.

5 MS. SHIRLEY BORHAUER: Shirley Borhauer. My
6 district is District 4, and I'm sure that everybody who is here
7 is more concerned about this district. If you look at this
8 report, it looks like a salamander. It dips in Benton County,
9 Carroll County, and Washington County, and there are people out
10 there in Carroll County who have different concerns than the
11 ones up here in Benton County, and that's really a spread out
12 kind of a district. I would hope that you would really

consider

13 condensing that a little bit. Thank you.

14 MR. HUMPHRIES: I would say in response to that,
15 that a lot of those kind of things are determined about where
16 the population is. I mean, you've got to -- you've got to find
17 the folks. If you'll notice, -- well you can't see all of
18 District 24 there, but you can see it on the big map over

there,

19 and that's shaped like the giant district. And it is
20 geographically, because nobody lives in that area.

21 Yes, sir.

22 MR. PHILIP TALDO: My name is Philip Taldo from
23 Springdale, and I'd just like to make a couple of observations.
24 Number one is that Springdale and Fayetteville are presently in
25 the same district, and whenever we do redraw the senatorial

1 district, and whenever we do redraw the lines, I think that the
2 folks -- the citizens in Rogers and in Springdale would be
3 better served if the district were drawn east and west rather
4 than take north and south, taking in parts of Rogers and parts
5 of Springdale.

6 I think that -- at least for myself, I feel like that the
7 people in Springdale would like to have their representatives,
8 their senators, and people in Rogers would like to have theirs.
9 Of course, it would extend however far east and west from
there.

10 The second observation I would like to make is that
11 Springdale school system has grown this year alone 700
students.

12 You know, you can multiply that probably by 2.5 if you want to
13 just see what in our school district -- which I know you're not
14 dealing with school districts, but it's just an indication of
15 what the growth is in our area. Our school district has come
16 out and said they're going to have to build one new school a
17 year for the next 10 years to keep up with the growth. I think
18 that translates into a lot more folks to have representation,
19 and I sure hope that you take a look at those other grid row
20 numbers whenever you're making your decisions and drawing your
21 lines and -- because I think that that is a good indication of
22 where we're going and where we've been.

23 MR. HUMPHRIES: Thank you.

24 MS. MARY SLINKARD: I think, Tim, you may know
25 what I'm about to address but I do have some concerns -- I'm

1 Mary Slinkard, County Clerk. I do have some concerns about our
2 current boundaries because of the way that they were districted
3 before, that we have a imaginary lines in our township
4 boundaries. Those do not follow a common boundary.

5 As I understand it, the census numbers will come out by
6 those little track numbers. Is that right?

7 MR. HUMPHRIES: Yes. Right.

8 MS. SLINKARD: Okay. And if you have a boundary
9 that has an imaginary line, you can't really get good figures
10 within those imaginary lines as you could with if you have
11 physical boundaries. And it does make a difference about the
12 district, how they're districted, if you have to go by
imaginary
13 boundaries.

14 If somehow we could address about changing those township
15 boundaries by a physical boundary, it would then make and
16 correspond with census numbers as they come out. If that could
17 be -- because we just went through a nightmare of an election
18 about where the districts are and what district people belong,
19 and then that way the election commission can draw their
20 precinct boundaries and do redistricting of JP boundaries in
21 that manner.

22 And I would just request that somehow we be able to
change
23 those township boundaries to the actual physical boundaries
that
24 people could understand.

25 MR. HUMPHRIES: It's something that needs to be

county 1 addressed in each county and can be addressed now by each
2 court. The county court has the ability to alter township
3 boundaries. Unfortunately, there's nothing we can do about it
need 4 now. I mean, it's something that's going to be -- that you
5 to do for the next decade census. If you did it now, if you
6 change those township boundaries now, since we're going to use
7 precincts as our basic building blocks, and since usually
going 8 precinct lines are on township lines -- right? Then we're
9 to be struck with that through the whole next decade.

10 We talked about this a little bit yesterday amongst the
11 group, and we talked about it on the way up. It's just
12 something that you're going to have to --

13 MS. SLINKARD: So we're stuck with it for another
14 10 years?

you're 15 MR. HUMPHRIES: Right. It's just something
16 going to have to stick in a time capsule somewhere, and in 10
17 years -- yeah, hope -- because this time the census made a big
18 push to get counties to put their precinct lines on physical
19 features. And to the extent they could, I think most people
20 did. But where your precinct line is also a township line
21 that's out on a section line somewhere, then, like I say, it's

22 too late to get anything done about it this time.

23 MS. SLINKARD: It's going to be another 10 years
24 before --

25 MR. HUMPHRIES: It's going to be another 10
years,

19

1 but let's remember to get that done 10 years down the road.

2 MR. DAVID MATTHEWS: Thank you, Tim, Butch,
3 Larry, Ron. We want to thank you for agreeing to conduct this
4 hearing in Rogers as a representative area for all of Northwest
5 Arkansas. My name is David Matthews, and I'm here to speak to
6 you today in a three-fold capacity. First as a lawyer;
secondly
7 as a Democrat, which may single me out in this room; and,
8 thirdly, as a parent.

9 I want to talk to you first about my role as a legal
10 representative. I have been engaged by the five area Chambers
11 of Commerce for this Northwest Arkansas area to participate, to
12 observe, and to give advice, to take whatever legal steps are
13 necessary, to insure that this representation decision is made
14 in a manner that is constitutionally fair.

15 Now, that can take one of two ways, Tim. You know, it
can
16 be in a role as plaintiff. It could equally be in the role as
17 amicus curie on behalf of this board. If you-all follow the
18 numbers as we believe them to be, we don't think that there
will

recount 19 be any difficulty. We don't think you'll have to have a
ballots, 20 here. We all are pretty smart, and we know how to cast
21 and we know where the numbers lie. And as a result of that, we
22 believe that if you-all -- if the census figures bear it out,
23 and Ron was quick to point that out -- that if the census
24 figures bear out what we know intuitively to be true, that ours
25 is the area of Arkansas that has had the highest percentage of

20

1 growth.
2 In fact, I'm from Lowell, which has the distinction of
3 being the fastest growing city in Arkansas, and it's the third
4 fastest growing city in the United States of America over the
5 last five years. We know that we've grown. Heck, just trying
6 to find a parking place teaches us all that. So we believe
that 7 if you follow those numbers that you will come up with a plan
8 that fairly represents us. And we will be there. We want you
9 to know that. We will be there to help you defend that
10 position.

11 We acknowledge that in times past, perhaps we have been
12 more complacent than we ought to have been about this. But we
13 realize that the determination of who our representatives are
is 14 important, but perhaps not as important as whether or not we

those 15 have representatives at all. And so we urge you to follow
16 numbers.

17 We know as Philip Taldo's talked about in Springdale, we
18 have know that in every school district in Northwest Arkansas we
19 seen an explosion of growth. In Rogers alone, we have built a
20 new school every year for the last 10 years. And we have every
21 reason to believe, based upon the best information that's
22 fact, available, that that growth will continue to increase. In
23 there are some in this room -- Charles Reeves comes to mind --
24 who have been preaching for several years, "You ain't seen
25 nothing yet." And so one of the things I want to urge you to

21

allowed 1 do, when you do use the census numbers is -- and you are
2 to move within that 10 percent range -- please, please, please,
3 growth deal with Northwest Arkansas on the low end. Give us the
4 room, because we know to a certainty we're going to continue to
5 grow. We're as sure of that as the sun is going to come up
6 tomorrow. And we've asked that you take that into
7 consideration.

view 8 The other thing I think that you must consider as you
9 this, and the census figures will bear that out, we may very
10 well have a very high concentration of minority individuals in

11 this area that must be factored in as well. I know that you
12 have to deal with minority questions in other parts of
Arkansas.
13 In the Rogers school system I happen to know about those
14 statistics, Butch, and you know how. We've been five weeks
15 together in Little Rock fussing over this. But we know in
16 Rogers that 21 and a half percent of our students now are
17 Hispanic. Twenty-one and a half percent. We have every reason
18 to believe that the population of all of Benton and Washington
19 County is probably 15 percent or greater Hispanic.
20 So to the extent that you have to deal with other
minority
21 concentrations, we ask you, we urge you, we insist, that you
22 take that into consideration here as well.
23 Now I want to talk you as a Democrat, because I want to
go
24 ahead and get out on that this is your second or third public
25 hearing. I want to get out on the table what we talk about in

22

1 the coffee shops here, and that is a fear, frankly, that this
2 reapportionment board is made up of one Republican and two
3 Democrats, and you don't have to be a rocket scientist, as they
4 say, to look at the election results and know how elections
have
5 been going in Benton County in recent years, and to some extent
6 in Washington County.

7 I want to assure you, those of you that represent General
8 Pryor and Secretary Priest, the Democrats in Benton County and
9 in Washington County would rather have a Republican
10 representative than have no representative. And the situation
11 that we find ourselves in now is, if you-all fall prey to the
12 urging of some to play partisan politics, then what you will do
13 is disenfranchise a significant part of the population of
14 Arkansas. And to put it in a blunt term, that is not
acceptable
15 to Democrats or to Republicans. And so we urge you to put
aside
16 that partisanship.

17 You know, one of the things you've got to realize is, up
18 here, much is made of the high concentration of Republicans.
19 The truth is, if you take all the Republicans out, the Democrat
20 vote that's left would rank us in the top ten of the counties
in
21 the Democrat votes in the state of Arkansas. We need to be, we
22 deserve to be, and we demand to be represented in our
23 legislative reapportionment.

24 And, finally, I want to talk to you as a parent. Like
25 everybody here, for the last week, we have seen our country

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1 gripped, really, by this National debate, this partisan
2 wrangling, if you will, this overriding concern, I think that
3 all of us have as to whether or not our vote means anything,

4 whether or not it counts, whether or not the political process
5 is one that we really ought to participate in. I have an
6 11-year-old daughter. She watches the news every day. She is
7 watching to see whether or not as she grows, that her vote will
8 mean anything.

9 And I want to say again, when you-all make the
10 determination as to how we apportion the legislative seats for
11 this state, it's very important that all of us be able to say
12 our children, "Your vote counts. You're not just getting swept
13 away in a partisan dispute; you're not getting -- you're not
14 getting thrust in with a great throng of people who are
15 underrepresented." Enfranchisement is not a partisan issue.
16 It's a Constitutional right. And we ask you to take that into
17 consideration.

18 And I have a question for you. As you can tell by this
19 group, we are keenly interested in this issue. Much more than
20 we've ever been, in the future. We are willing, if necessary,
21 to attend each of the remaining forums that you have in the
22 State of Arkansas, if that -- if that will be a benefit to you
23 for our group to be represented there, we'll come. If we need
24 to load up buses and park outside the Capitol when you're
25 meeting, we'll do that. Just tell us what you need from us to

1 help you justify a decision to give us the fair number of

2 senators and representatives, and we'll do it. We'll go any
3 distance, bear any cost. Tell us what we need to do.

4 MR. HUMPHRIES: We're in Magnolia tomorrow and
5 Helena on Thursday.

6 MR. MATTHEWS: Will it be of benefit to you to
7 hear this same speech 15 times?

8 MR. HUMPHRIES: I think we can pass it on to
9 them. We've got it, David.

10 MR. REEVES: I can assure you, the people in the
11 other places we've been, they've heard the cry long and hard
12 from Northwest Arkansas. They repeat your cry to us when we go
13 to Mountain Home, to wherever. We've already heard what you're
14 going to say. And they tell us. They know that's what you're
15 going to say. So they understand that. They understand that.
16 I don't know if they like it, but they understand it.

17 MR. MATTHEWS: I understand. Then I'll end with
18 this. It's something my grandma told me. "Right's right, and
19 it never hurt anybody." Thank you.

20 MR. HUMPHRIES: I would, again, point out our web
21 site has a comment section on it, and we encourage you to use
22 that and also to telephone and snail mail. Yes, sir.

23 MR. LEVI PHILLIPS: Mr. Levi Phillips from
24 Carroll County.

25 First of all, I would like to say that I'm from Arkansas,

1 and proud of that. I'm proud to be from Northwest Arkansas.
2 The thing I would like for the board to also look into, we know
3 -- by being in Northwest Arkansas we know the tremendous amount
4 of growth that we've had. Especially in Benton and Washington
5 County. And the point I would like to make for the board and
6 for other people to look at, we're from a smaller county -- as
7 we all know, from Carroll County -- and we'd like to -- from
8 Carroll County and I would say Madison, Newton, and the other
9 smaller counties -- we would like to request that we not be
10 chopped up to make the numbers fit for Benton and Washington
11 County.

numbers

12 I mean, I agree with everybody here, the growth is going
13 crazy up here. We need to be on the low side, and those
14 with what we got in smaller counties can put us -- and let
15 Benton and Washington County be on the low side of the growth,
16 because they're going to continue to grow, and they're going to
17 help our state. I mean, the tax base and stuff in Northwest
18 Arkansas. So I think that's -- would be one of my requests to
19 sitting on the Election Commission also would be to really,
20 really look. It's a complete disaster when we -- on the
21 Election Commission when we go through towns and townships,
22 though the census is taken that way, because maybe possibly we
23 on the Election Commissions in some of these smaller counties
24 counties didn't do our job 10 years ago to get our stuff right,
25 what you say, but when we divide down a street, it leaves the

even

or

1 Election Commission with their hands up saying, "Does this
2 person live here?" And so and so forth.

3 Those are a couple of concerns I would like to see that -
4 take interest in some of the smaller counties and not lob off a
5 township that's got 300 just to make the variance there.

6 MR. HUMPHRIES: Okay. Thank you. Anybody else?
7 We might be home by seven o'clock. We appreciate you coming
8 out. Use the web site.

9 (Wherein the hearing was adjourned.)

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Reporter

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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I, CYNTHIA A. DONALD, a Certified Court

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and Notary Public in and for the County of Washington, State of

4

Arkansas, do hereby certify:

5

That said hearing was reported at the time and place

6

therein stated by me and thereafter transcribed.

7

I further certify that I am not interested in the outcome

8

of said action, nor connected with nor related to any of the

9

parties in said action or their respective counsel.

10

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and

11

affixed my seal of office this 24th day of November, 2000.

12

13

14

NOTARY PUBLIC

15

In and for the County of Washington
State of Arkansas

16

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My Commission Expires:

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November 5, 2009

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